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having been 38, 69, and 193 in the three preceding weeks. For these same weeks the deaths referred to diseases of the respiratory organs were 646, 938, and 1,172, while last week they rose to 1,221, or 558 above the corrected average. Some of those deaths may be put down as due to increase of respiratory disease caused by the abnormal irregularity and inclemency of the weather. But it can not be doubted that they are really due in great measure to the prevailing epidemic of influenza. Doctors differ greatly in their classification of cases in which an attack of influenza is followed by bronchitis or pneumonia, and it is quite inevitable that this should happen. The causation is not equally clear in all cases, and it may frequently happen that the doctor never sees the initial influenza at all, being called in only when the secondary disease has developed.

"Again, it is not at all uncommon for the patient to recover to all appearance from the influenza, and to be struck down a day or two, or even several days, later by some form of respiratory disease. It is difficult in such cases to be sure that the second attack is really part of the first. It is frequently ascribed to some indiscretion, as, for example, going out too soon or otherwise exposing oneself to a chill, and a doctor may not feel justified in going behind the actual malady with which he is called upon to deal. Nevertheless, there is good ground for the opinion held by many medical men that the development of respiratory disease after an attack of influenza is part and parcel of the effect of the influenza poison, and does not depend upon a subsequent indiscretion on the part of the patient. That poison is exceedingly subtle and produces long lasting effects in other directions. The nervous system, for example, may need months or even years to recover completely from its effects, and there are other unpleasant *sequelæ* which do not always manifest themselves at once. It is, therefore, highly probable that a great many deaths from respiratory disease, occurring during the prevalence of influenza, are really directly due to that formidable and little understood malady. We have traced some dreaded diseases to their source, and have learned how to avoid their propagation, at least to a very considerable extent. But influenza has so far baffled research. We do not know its natural home, or the laws of its appearance, or the sanitary precautions that may avert its attack. We do know, however, that it is highly contagious, that its incubation period is short, that its onset is sudden, and that the best we can do to escape it is to avoid whatever may tend to lower the tone of the system."

Quarantine against Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on account of plague.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 31, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor by direction of the Secretary of State, to inform you that the consul at Amsterdam reports in his dispatch of the 18th instant, that the minister of foreign affairs of the Netherlands has declared a ten days' quarantine against Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on account of the presence of the plague at that port.

Respectfully, DAVID J. HILL,
Assistant Secretary.

Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Reports from Rotterdam.

ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS, *January 23, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to make the following report for the week ended January 22, 1900: During the week 7 vessels were inspected as follows: January 16, bark *Patagonia*, sand ballast, for Savannah, Ga.; steamship *Starfond*, sand ballast, for Delaware Breakwater, for orders. January 17, steamship *Durango*, general cargo, for Baltimore. January 18, steamship *Maasdam*, with 21 cabin passengers and 126 steerage passengers, general cargo, for New York; bark *B. D. Metcalf*, sand ballast, for Savannah, Ga. January 22, steamship *Helios*, water ballast, for New York; bark *Aldgate*, sand ballast, for Savannah, Ga.

Inspection at this port was begun on the 15th instant, and since then all vessels have been visited and the vessel and crews inspected. In general there has been no difficulty in this matter. Most of the vessels have been in good condition, except those in regular lines, on which time is saved in all possible ways, for which reason there is never any time